

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 29, 2021

The Honorable Frank Kendall  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20330

Dear Secretary Kendall:

Congratulations on your recent confirmation as the Secretary of the Air Force. We trust that your years of experience at the Pentagon and in the private industry will serve the Air Force well as it moves to counter tomorrow's threats. We look forward to working with you to ensure the Air Force is poised to meet the strategic challenges that lay ahead.

With the recent conclusion of the Air Force's site survey at Fairchild, and as you move forward with the next steps in the strategic basing process, we would like to take the opportunity to highlight a few of the things that make Fairchild the ideal home for the KC-46 tankers.

Deserving the utmost consideration is Fairchild's strategic location. As the world's largest air refueling base with strategic proximity to China, Taiwan, the Korean peninsula, and Russia, Fairchild is best located to support military actions to protect the United States and its allies from future adversarial threats. We must continue to plan ahead to defeat 21<sup>st</sup> century threats, and we encourage you to consider the strategic value of Fairchild as you select the next site for the new tankers.

Another important factor to consider is the culture and leadership at Fairchild. Whenever we visit the base, we are struck by how passionate the airmen are about the air refueling mission. Airmen and their families are valued and respected, and base leadership goes above and beyond to make sure servicemembers receive the highest levels of support and general care. Wing leadership works tirelessly to make Fairchild the exceptional location that it is.

Finally, the level of community support enjoyed by the base cannot be understated. As the largest employer in the area, accounting for around 13% of Eastern Washington's economy, Fairchild is the lifeblood of the Spokane and Airway Heights communities. From partnerships between the base and local colleges for advancing airmen education, to partnerships with the local Spokane Indians baseball team, the surrounding community loves Fairchild and consistently goes above and beyond to support the base and ensure its servicemembers thrive.

We respectfully hope you will keep these considerations in mind as you move forward in the strategic basing process for the next round of KC-46 Pegasus tankers. We would also like work with you on an opportunity in the coming weeks for stakeholders in the Spokane and Airway

Heights communities to hear directly from you or your team about the selection process and criteria for consideration.

Thank you for your service to our country and for the time and effort you have put into this site selection. We look forward to our continued work together on behalf of the United States Air Force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathy McMorris Rodgers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cathy" being the most prominent.

Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patty Murray". The signature is cursive and elegant, with the first name "Patty" being the most prominent.

Patty Murray  
United States Senator